



الجمعية الخيرية اليونانية في بيروت
ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΣ ΒΗΡΥΤΟΥ
GREEK COMMUNITY OF BEIRUT



Ta Nea

Issue 24
May 2021

May...It Be!

It has been over a year since the pandemic hit our lives, altering it in every possible aspect!

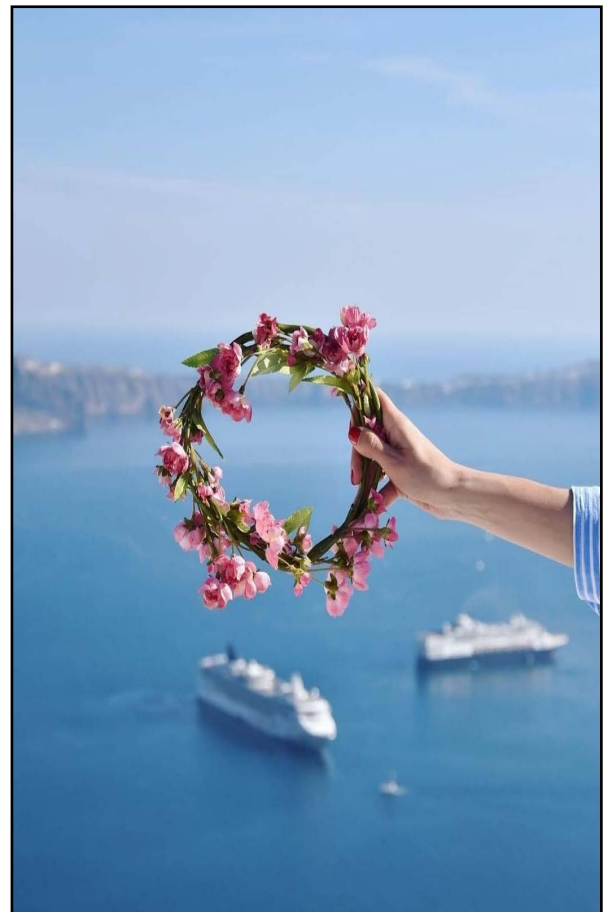
The human race is in its nature responsive to change; it is the only way to survive as per Darwin, and we have survived this far. May the end of this race and battle will soon follow so our lives will go back to being “normal”, healthy, less restrained, life as we knew it. We all missed going out, creating memories, traveling, exploring....we miss living. May “the month of May” bring us closer to this dream.

Perhaps are we to turn our praise to the Greek Goddess Maia, goddess of fertility or to the Romans’ goddess named Bona Dea like in the ancient days? Festivals were held for Bona Dea during the month of May.

While on May 1st, in Greece, flower wreaths are being meticulously fabricated and hanged as part of the Greek Protomagia, Labour Day is celebrated worldwide. May 3rd is the World Laughter Day, a movement initiated by Dr. Madan Kataria in India where the first celebration took place in Mumbai in 1998. May 8th is the World Red Cross Day on which the birth anniversary of the founder, Henry Dunant, is commemorated. He was as well the founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). He was born in Geneva in 1828 and became the first recipient of the 1st Nobel Peace prize.

In this issue, we will unveil a new museum that opened in Greece, and since in May we also celebrate Saint George, we will share with you the honourable work the St. George Hospital is raising amid the hard conditions.

Till then, stay safe and enjoy reading.





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Athens has a new ...Olympic Museum

Located within the Golden Hall Mall in Marousi, the Athens Olympic Museum is an international museum that showcases the history of the Games highlighting the Hellenic Influence in the formation of the Olympic Movement. The Olympic Games began over 2,700 years ago in Olympia, in south west Greece.

The Museum is designed by local architecture practice KLab and Mulo Creative Lab and combines culture and sports in a minimalist, yet rich spatial experience.

The museum occupies some 3,500 square metres and tells the story of the Olympic Games in displays which are distinctively organized in two parts.

A display focuses on the origins of the ancient Games from their very foundation to today's international sporting get-together every four years, and a hall is dedicated to Ancient Olympia, the cradle of the Olympics.

The second display focuses on the wider Olympic Movement (also celebrated in museums in other parts of the world), the role of athletes and the sports of the Games.

The nine-metre-high walls display a striking graphic portrayal with posters and information on each celebration of the modern Games right through to 2021.

There is also a specific room dedicated to the Athens 2004 Olympics including props used during the spectacular Opening Ceremony.

Next time you're strolling in Marousi, the Museum is within walking distance of the 2004 Olympic stadium; make sure you visit it.

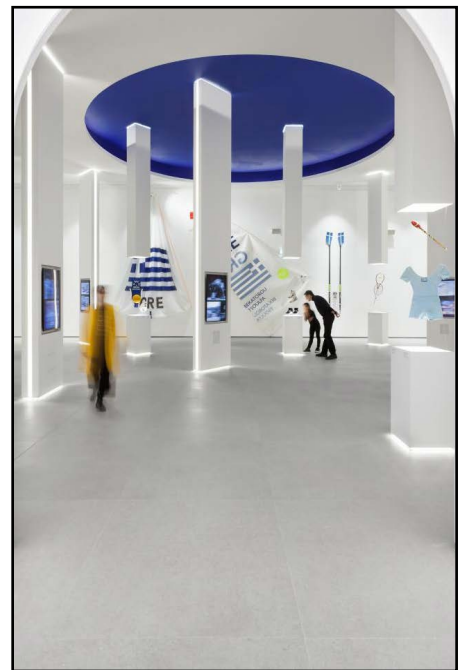
Address: Leof. Kifisias 37a, Marousi 151 23, Greece



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St. George Hospital Admirable Works

The Saint George Hospital has been founded in 1878 and is known as a non-profit community hospital. It is owned by the Orthodox Archdiocese of Beirut and is academically affiliated to the University of Balamand. It is a hospital that needs no introduction and is at the forefront of medicine for it has been serving over the past 150 years with commitment, compassion, seeking to achieve excellence in medical services through the implementation of healthcare quality standards.

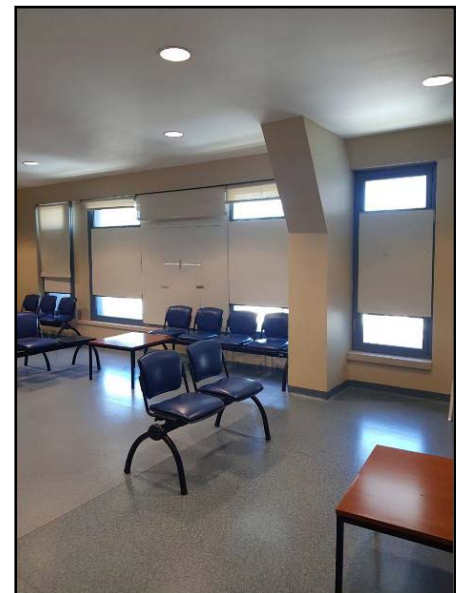
On August 4, 2020, the Saint George Hospital took a terrible hit with the explosion and the



entire hospital was rendered non-operational. It sustained severe damages however this didn't stop the mission of the hospital to save lives. A lot of work is needed on different levels of the hospital and the cost of this rehabilitation runs into an estimate of more than forty million US Dollars.

Mr. Sami Haddad, Project Management Director in charge of the renovation works informed us that the main constraints

they are dealing with are the elevators, doors and windows. Only 3 out of 14 elevators are currently working on an automated work with an operator; 5 are unrepairable and the others require parts which come at an elevated cost. Doors and windows are currently replaced with wood panels which obstruct the light and gives the impression of being in a basement.





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Ventilation and purification are working in the rooms. The aluminium has been ordered it requires about a month to reach their premises and an additional of 6 months to be installed.

Medical equipment and furniture are also damaged and there is a major shortage of supply the hospital is currently working on but on a secondary aspect.

Out of 163 beds, 140 are currently operating normally.

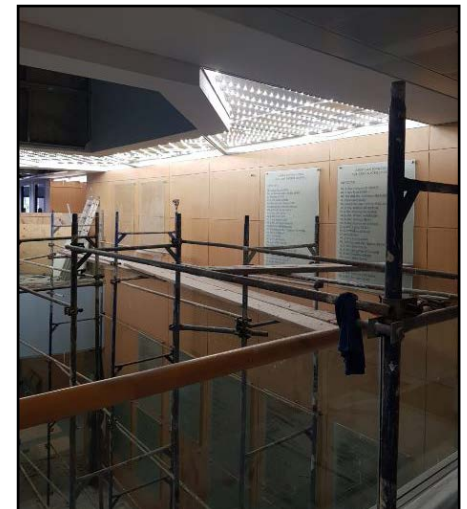


The helipad which was executed with the help of the generous support of the Greek Government and the Hellenic Aid that partially funded this project in 2009, was fortunately not affected by the blast. It is currently still operating for the landing of emergency cases by the UNIFIL and the Lebanese Army.

The major concern and priority is the safety. Fire fighting systems, and fire alarms are already installed and elevators will be tested prior to their utilization.

The hospital has open gradually in order not to jeopardize the safety of its staff, patients and visitors.

They expect to resume the hospital's mission of providing excellent healthcare services to its community by the end of this year.



Every donation counts to rebuild

<https://www.stgeorgehospital.org/stgeorge-donation>



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El Talisman

Amid all the chaos and the threats we've been living in the past year and a half, who wouldn't need a divine intervention or extra protection?! We could all use the magic and healing powers of a lucky charm, an amulet, a talisman....

Talismans have been used in many civilizations throughout history and have been linked to astrological, scientific, and religious practices.

The word talisman comes from the ancient Greek *telesma* (τέλεσμα), meaning "completion, religious rite" from the verb *teleō* (τελέω) "I complete, perform a rite".

Greek amulets may be divided into two broad types: **talismans** (which brought good luck) and **phylacteries** (which protected). They were made of wood, bone, stone, or more rarely, semi-precious gemstones. ... Some of these amulets are still widely used today in Greece, mainly, the evil eye.



Amulets and charms defending against the evil eye can be found dating back to the late Classical period, and seemed to originate from Egypt before spreading throughout the Middle East. The most common colours are green and blue, representing the least common eye colours among the populations of that region, and are viewed with superstition. The eye amulet is what is known as an 'apotropaic' symbol, meaning 'turning back', as its purpose is literally to reflect the evil eye back on the person who casts it or, you could simply call your 'yaya' to cast a 'xematiasma' spell!

Careful though, those talismans can be also harmful and dangerous if misused. Take for example, the Trojan Horse in Ancient Greece which was meant to offer protection but instead brought the downfall of the proud Trojans. You might not want to abuse on the use of a talisman nor literally fall for a charm!



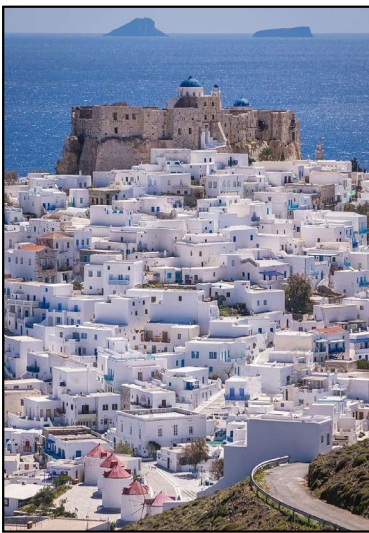


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The Charm of Greek Blue & White Island Houses



Two colours blissfully merging together procuring a breathtaking scenery: it is as if sea and sky collide. This could be a good definition of a typical island where blue and white houses are considered a distinct trait in the Greek architecture.

Aside from the aesthetic appeal this iconic combination offers and is worldwide recognized for, there are particular reasons and benefits as to why island houses are painted in blue and white. As most homes in islands like Mykonos, Paros and Naxos were originally built out of stone, residents found that painting the stones in white was efficient to cool down the indoor spaces providing cooler and more comfortable homes particularly during the unbearable hot summers.

Added to this, in 1938, Greece suffered from an outbreak of cholera. A national order then was ruled out under the dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas and accelerated the spread of this new design aesthetic. To curb the disease, citizens were ordered to whitewash their homes as it contained limestone which is a powerful disinfectant.

What about the blue colour, where did it derive from? The vibrant blue colour still dominates the Cycladic landscape but it mainly comes down to its affordable cost.

The blue used in Greek island houses was made from a mixture of limestone and a cleaning product called "loulaki". Loulaki is a kind of blue talcum powder most islanders had readily available at home. Additionally fishermen painted their windows and shutters with whatever was left over after painting their boat which was mainly of blue colour, being the cheapest of paint.

As a final reason, in 1974 there was a law passed out by the military dictatorship that ruled Greece in 1967 to mandate the painting of Greek island homes in blue and white. The regime believed the colours would inspire patriotism and were reflective of Greek nationalism.

Nowadays, the iconic blue and white island houses has become a trademark of Greek tourism which charms travellers all over the world.



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In the News



The Institut français de Grèce et RetroNews launched a digital exposition entitled “La Grèce par amour/ Από αγάπη για την Ελλάδα” to honour the Greek Revolution and the unifying emotion it engendered throughout Europe. Since 1821, the Greek Revolution easily spread in France, England, Germany, creating a philhellenic movement on both the political and philosophical front.

For a detailed tour, please browse: <https://1821.ifg.gr/fr/exposition>

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO GREEK CITIZENS

Kindly contact our Center by phone or email informing us about any change of address, phone number or social status helping us to keep our data list updated.





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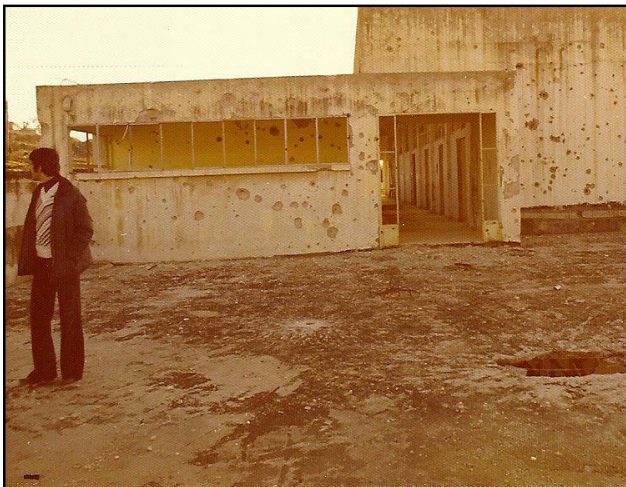


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Oldies But Goldies

Photographs can trigger memories and allow us to briefly relive the bitter sweet moments captured and marked forever as part of us. Going through old photographs can be such a healing process.

We'd love you to share with us your stories along with the most heartwarming historic photos you might have stored in those old albums.



1979- Greek School After the War





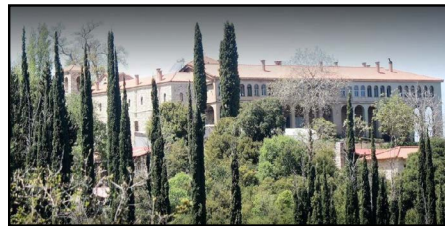
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2021, the bicentennial of the Greek revolution

Located in Kalavrita, the Agia Lavra Monastery played a crucial role in the creation of Modern Greece. It is the symbolic birthplace of Modern Greece. Agia Lavra is one of oldest monasteries in Peloponnese, tucked amid a lush vegetation at an altitude of 961m with open views to the Vouraikos river valley. It consists of an imposing cluster of building with trees all around.



The Monastery of Agia Lavra was founded by the monk Eugene Askitis and was firstly built in 961 A.C. in the close by area Paleomonastiro.

It was actually burnt to the ground several times in 1585 by the Turks because the Monastery would hide the Greek revolutionists, and rebuilt in 1600 only to be burnt again in 1715 and in 1826 by the armies of Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt. In 1850 after the rebirth of modern Greece, the building was completely rebuilt. The monastery was burned down by the Nazi in 1943 and three monks were killed as they refused to abandon the monastery. Finally, in 1950 the Monastery of Agia Lavra was rebuilt with donations of pilgrims and the state's support.

It is within the doors of the monastery that the Greek War of Independence was declared where the call for Eleftheria I Thanatos (Ελευθερία ή θάνατος) was heard for the first time on 25th of March 1821, launching hence the revolution against the Ottoman Empire. The Metropolitan Germanos of Patras performed a doxology on that day, blessing the revolutionary flag that was raised outside the gate of the monastery. The War of Independence lasted about nine years. Every March 25th, the Monastery of Agia Lavra celebrates the Greek Independence from the Turks with reenactments of the gathering of the Greek leaders and the raising of the Revolution's Banner.





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Everything you need to know about the consulate:

All requests should be addressed by email in order to obtain an appointment.

Visa Applications: For visa applications please visit our website

www.mfa.gr/missionabroad/en/lebanon-en.

Additionally, due to the lockdown and the restrictions, Greece is not issuing visas at the moment. Exceptions can be made to specific cases and only by appointment.

Passport renewal or issuance: You will get an appointment by receiving an email.

Required documents are: 2 photo passport size (4x6), a Greek identity card or a birth certificate (that can be provided by us if you send us in advance any old Greek birth or family certificate).

For additional info kindly visit <http://www.passport.gov.gr/en/>

Legalization of documents: The Consular Office can legalize any Lebanese official document that has been stamped by the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is advised to ask for an appointment by email.

Power of Attorney: The Consular Office can exceptionally provide a power of attorney to Lebanese citizens that have already made an investment in Greece and want to apply for a residence permit.

Marriage, birth, death registration: Required documents: The Lebanese certificates of marriage, birth or death stamped by the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and translated in Greek (translations in English or French are accepted as well).

Any old Greek birth or family certificate to be sent in advance by email.

The Consular Office is currently upgrading the embassy's website in order to make it more friendly user and to provide all necessary information and downloadable documents.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO GREEK CITIZENS

This section has been specially created by the Greek Community of Beirut with the kind collaboration of the consulate of Greece in order to better serve Greek citizens who wish to have information on all administrative formalities before presenting their requests.

Consular Office can be reached by email at grcon.bei@mfa.gr



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We would love to hear your stories and include them in our newsletter. If you wish to publish your own article like Ms. Maya Bou Chebl did below with her beautiful poem, you may share it with us. We will review it and consider it for the next issue.

Letter to my son

My son I am writing you this letter,
to tell you about an important matter.
I am not sure if this letter will arrive,
Nor sure if in a year I'll be alive.

My son, if you'll see the day,
I want you to know that I'll fight.
I hold my cross and I pray,
Hoping for a future that is bright.

My son, we are prisoners of our home,
But I promise you won't.
I will fight for you, fight for freedom,
I will fight today, so that tomorrow you don't.

Freedom has no price,
Our country might be dying,
But soon, it will rise,
Our independence we'll be taking.

It started in 1821, it's been over a year,
But I really hope that the end will be near.
We lived miserable,
It was unbearable.

If your country no longer feels like home,
Then where would you go?
We had to fight, luckily not on our own,
We want those colonizers to go.
If in your country, you can no longer pray,
Then where would you stay?
If in your country you no longer fit,
Then can you go home and sit?

I fight for you, I fight for me,
I fight for her, I fight for Greece,
We want it to be free,
We want independence, we want peace.

Greece, 1822
Maya Bou Chebl



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COMMUNAUTÉ HELLÉNIQUE DE BIENFAISANCE DE BEYROUTH



γλῶσσαν νάμαν

The Greek **Community of Beirut** in cooperation with the **Ministry of Education of Greece** and its official entity with the Greek Language Centre, will be operating as an examination center pertaining to the **Greek Language Certification Exams** at the Greek Community premises.

Examinations dates for the Certificate of Attainment for the year 2021 in Greece and abroad as follows:

Levels		Dates	Examination Price
A1 (for children 8-12 years old)	Elementary Knowledge	Monday 04 October 2021 (morning)	65 euro
A1 (for adolescents and adults)		Monday 04 October 2021 (morning)	
A2	Basic Knowledge	Tuesday 05 October 2021 (morning)	73 euro
B1	Average Knowledge	Wednesday 06 October 2021 (morning)	
B2	Good Knowledge	Thursday 07 October 2021 (morning)	
C1	Very Good Knowledge	Tuesday 05 October 2021 (afternoon)	
C2	Fluency	Monday 04 October 2021 (afternoon)	

**Oral examinations are held immediately after the written examinations.*

-Registrations will start as of 1st of February till 21st of March 2021.

-Applications can be either submitted electronically to

<http://www.greek-language.gr/certification/application/index.html>

Or on the spot at the **Greek Community** premises

For further clarifications **outside the lockdown**, you may contact the Greek Language Courses Administrator during the office hours

(M-F /12:00 PM – 6:00 PM) on the following contact details:

Address: Greek Community of Beirut Dekwaneh - Parallel Towers 232 Block A - 3rd Floor

Tel: +961 1 493467/8 and on Mob: +961 81 410 848 During the lockdown

E-mail: stephanie@greekcommunity.org.lb

Website: <http://www.greekcommunityofbeirut.com/>